



IMPORT/EXPORT: CHINA



“IN DOING BUSINESS TRUST IS ALL IMPORTANT.”
MICHAEL THOMAS

doing business in China. There is legislation on IP protection on its way from central government and that is likely to improve things.”

He suggested speaking directly to experts in the field such as UK Trade & Investment (UK T&I) and the Overseas Market Introduction Service (OMIS) to access industry information and identify potential contacts. Attending trade shows, events and seminars as well as going with trade missions can also be of enormous help in demystifying the whole process. With due diligence, any bumps along the way can be flattened out before committing.

in formal publications; it could even be dismissed as colloquial but that would be a mistake. This important area can be summarised as relationships, gifts and entertainment.

“When establishing a relationship it is important to identify one member of your business to take that role,” explained Thomas. “In doing business in China trust is all important and your counterpart over there will want to get to know you as a friend as well as a business person.

“It is also vital to identify the chief decision maker. You will usually find that the person sat opposite you is the one to focus on. Negotiations will not proceed in a straight line but you will get to an agreement in the end it will just take longer than you may be used to. And never underestimate their negotiating skills; they are brilliant at it.”

Thomas admitted the issue of gifts can be fraught but suggested taking advice from those in the know. For example, never give a clock as that is regarded as bad luck, he said. A good policy is to take a gift that epitomises Wales.

Finally, something like 75% of business deals are concluded in places of entertainment. “Drinking and eating are part of the game that you will be expected to play. You should enter into the spirit of things and it will certainly help your cause if you do so,” Thomas said.

Paul Greenwood, commercial manager of Teddington Engineering Solutions (TES) based at Dafen Park, Llanelli, concentrated on his company’s direct experience of doing business in China.

The award-winning company specialises in



The association hears tips on China.

“That is one of the reasons it can be helpful to find a partner, possibly a British one already doing business over there. Additionally, you will need to be aware of the importance of IP protection when

The final piece of the jigsaw comes with an understanding of the business culture prevalent in the country. This is the part that rarely features

Opportunities and differences

China as a market offers huge opportunities to businesses but a dedicated approach that thoroughly takes into account cultural differences is critical, as Dai Blatchford discovered at the latest meeting of the West Wales Exporters Association.

The second West Wales Exporters Association (WWEA) meeting of the year focused on China and took place on March 1 at the Oriental Gardens in Swansea’s Maritime Quarter. The WWEA annual general meeting preceded presentations by two speakers on the subject of exporting to China.

The evening’s main speaker was Michael Thomas of the China-Britain Business Council (CBBC). He was supported by Llanelli-based Paul Greenwood, of Teddington Engineered Solutions. Thomas began his presentation by pointing out the huge opportunities that the country’s burgeoning

economy. “The world has turned and if we miss out on China then we will miss out on a lot,” he explained.

“Many will find the idea of doing business with a country of 1.3 billion people a daunting prospect. And it is true that it is an astonishing country undergoing a prolonged period of rapid change. There are 22 provinces and four municipalities making up the country and they differ widely. The right way to approach exporting to China is therefore to view it as several countries rather than a single entity.”

As is the case when doing business with any country, Thomas told delegates that research and

preparation were crucial. He recommended a raft of measures including identifying any possible legal barriers, identifying a market for your products or services, the possibility of working with a partner, evaluation of business risks such as protecting your IP and understanding how to secure payment.

“To establish your business in China you should count on it taking three times long as it would in this country,” Thomas explained. “Not only that but it is likely to cost three times as much and when you factor in the size of the country and the cost of travel there can be a good deal of money involved.

WEST WALES EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION PROFILES



Good With Words

53 Newton Road
Mumbles
Swansea
SA3 4BD

Tel: 01792-360365

www.goodwithwords.biz
info@goodwithwords.biz



iCreate Ltd

Technium 2 Kings Road
Swansea Waterfront
SA1 8PH

**Tel: 01792 824894
or 485701**

www.icreate3d.com
email: swansea@icreate3d.com



SA1 Solutions Ltd

Cambrian House
Cambrian Place
Swansea
SA1 1RH

Tel: 01792 464242

www.sa1solutions.com
enquiries@sa1solutions.com



Pritchard Stockbrokers

3 J Shed
Kings Road
Swansea
SA1 8PL

Tel: 01792 644 119

Fax: 01792 470 460

www.pritchard.co.uk